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ABSTRACT

A visit to India to gather information on the INSAT-1B satellite project for the purpose of identifying the main issues involved in using satellites for education and teaching purposes, with respect to potential Open University of Great Britain involvement is outlined in this report. Organizations visited and individuals interviewed are identified, and a 33-item list of documentation on the Indian satellite experience collected during the visit or through desk research is provided. (MES)

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SATELLITES FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Report on Visit to India, November 28 - December 13 1986

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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Purpose of Visit

The main purpose of the visit was to collect information on the Indian INSAT-1B satellite project. This information is to be used in three ways:

(a) as part of a wider study to identify the main issues involved in using satellites for education and training, with respect to potential Open University involvement

(b) to collect information which could be used for teaching material on Block 4, Education and Training, on DT200, 'An Introduction to Information Technology'.

(c) to assist with the collection of material for the TV programme associated with the teaching material on DT200.

Funding

Funding for this visit was from a grant from the Committee for Academic Developments in Information Technology at the Open University and was used primarily for (a) above. However, some assistance with internal Indian travel resulted from co-ordinating the trip with the production of TV1 for DT200.

Visits

National Centre for Educational Research and Training, Delhi (NCERT)

Two visits were made to the Central Institute for Educational Technology (CIET) in NCERT. CIET is currently the main production and research centre for the schools programming being produced for INSAT.

The following people were interviewed:

M.M. CHAUDRI	Director, CIET
DAVID SELIGMAN	UNESCO Consultant to CIET
PROFESSOR DEWAL	Head of Research and Evaluation
A PRODUCER	(whose name I did not get).

I also viewed about five or six programmes produced by CIET, and took away a large amount of documentation on CIET's involvement with INSAT.

A need was expressed for distance learning packages on media research. Interest was also shown in the OU pack, 'Using TV in Distance Education'.

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University Grants Committee, Delhi

The UGC is funding and organising the production of programmes aimed at university students, and general cultural and scientific programming aimed at the general public. I interviewed:

S.S. SWANI Principal Scientific Officer, Mass Communications Unit

The UGC is funding the establishment of a number of production centres based at Universities for the purpose, and is also buying in programmes from abroad, including £50,000 of Open University programming, for use on INSAT.

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Delhi

The IGNOU enroiled its first students in August. I interviewed:

DR.A.W. KHAN Director of Communications Division

He is responsible for the production and distribution of audio-visual and print materials for IGNOU.

He was interested in purchasing the pack "Using Television in Distance Education", and also expressed a need for training materials in media research.

IGNOU is hoping to use INSAT, but it is clear that there is a clash of priorities between its needs and those of the UGC. IGNOU is considering the possibility of video distribution to local study centres, due to the difficulty of reaching the vast majority of students without television sets. IGNOU also lacks production capability at the moment, and is contracting in external production.

IGNOU's first two courses which begin in January 1987 are post-graduate diplomas in

(a) distance education (I also met Dr. KAL, who is the CT chairman for his course). This has had 5000 applications for 1500 places.

(b) management.

Its first undergraduate courses begin in January 1988.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Ahmedabad

Several visits were made to the Development and Educational Communication Unit (DECU) and interviews with the following were held:

DR. KIRAN KARNIK	Director, DECU
DR. BINOD AGRAWAL	Senior Research and Evaluation Officer, DECU
DR. BHATIA	Head of Programme Production

As well as gathering a great deal of documentation and information on INSAT and its applications, discussions were held about the relative value of video and broadcasting for IGNOU with whom DECU is working.

Filming for TV4, DT200 was also done while I was at ISRO.

INSAT Direct Broadcast Reception Village, Ponsina, GUJARAT

Ponsina is a five-hour drive north of Ahmedabad, on the Gujarat/Rajasthan border. It is a remote, semi-tribal village, and thus represents one of the key areas for the INSAT project.

Interviews were held with a school teacher, the Chief Engineer responsible for maintenance in the area, a rural development officer, a farmer, and his three daughters.

Filming for TV9 was also carried out while at this village.

Report

A full report on INSAT -1B incorporating both material collected in India and from desk research is available separately.

Summary

The visit was extremely successful and I was able to gather all the information I wanted, including detailed and sensitive cost data. Full co-operation was given by all those approached.

Documentation

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